

INCOMING TELEGRAM

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Department of State

TELEGRAPH BRANCH
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Action

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FROM: Athens

TO: Secretary of State

NO: 1745, October 16, 2 p.m.

Venizelos has addressed note to Brit Charge stating his govt does not intend prolong contract of Brit police mission which expires 11 Jan 1952. Reasons cited are: (1) Necessity of strict economy to reduce charges Greek budget and (2) Claim that due to excellent work accomplished by mission Greek police no longer have urgent need of its services.

Brit Charge is consulting London as to whether to endeavor prolong contract another year. Complicating factor is that Brit Treasury wld be glad to save 50,000 pounds which is cost to HMG. Brit Emb however considers retention mission to be very desirable and is recommending to London. Charge has inquired whether we wld assist in persuading Greek Govt prolong contract.

We also consider retention mission for another year desirable. It does not compete with or duplicate work of any US missions. It is only foreign body which keeps close watch on behavior of Greek gendarmerie and police. In present unsettled period with broad amnesty measures about to be adopted and new elections within few months highly probable, we consider this supervision important. We have little doubt efficiency of gendarmerie particularly wld suffer from withdrawal mission this time. Moreover we find their reports to be of considerable value as objective accounts developments in provinces where this Emb has no representatives. Cost of mission to Greek budget is only 3-4 billion drachmae.

We have therefore informed Brit Charge that if his govt wishes request prolongation of contract we wld be disposed to support request. We have emphasized that character of our support wld be limited and we wld not if Greeks prove intransigent go all out on this issue.

PEURIFOY

GEM:WJS

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